

## Educational.

## LIBRARIES.

(BY J. FRED. STILES, WASHINGTON, D. C.)

Among other good things which we find in the able Report of the Commissioner of Education at Washington, Hon. John Eaton, we call this week something respecting Libraries. The statistics are elaborate and suggestive. Every year shows a great advance in the library interest. New Libraries are being established, and great accretions of books are reported to all.

We are especially interested in remarks connected with the dedication of the Concord Free Library, a gift of Mr. Munroe, from which we make the following extracts:

It may not be generally known, and it may interest this audience to know, how early Concord stands among New England towns as the owner of a town-library. I do not refer to the establishment of the present library in 1851, though that was early among the towns. Our antiquity is much greater, and goes back at least two hundred years. If any other town or city can claim precedence of us, they are invited to show their title. In 1673, a committee, consisting of ten gentlemen, was chosen to give instructions to the selectmen, and of the seventeen articles which they prepared the third read as follows:

"That care be taken of the books of matters, and other books, that belong to the Town, that they be kept from abuse, and not to be lent to persons more than one month at a time."

It only remains for me, in the name and in behalf of the town and its inhabitants, to give some slight expression of their respect and gratitude to their benefactor. We thank you, sir, not only for the magnitude of the gift in its pecuniary value, but for the wise and thoughtful spirit which planned the benefaction and has watched over every detail of its completion. You have given us a town library, and something more; you have made it henceforth a town better worth living in. We are glad to think that this is an expression of kind feeling and regard to us, the present inhabitants of Concord, and that the interest of personal acquaintance in our minds is thus touching the story of the olden time, when the elders of the people went to invoke the Master's aid for the cure of the afflicted, the affectionate phrase of their intervention was that "he is worthy, for he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a good house." But we recognize in your bounty not merely kindness to your friends and neighbors, but the generation which you know and by which you are known, but something fruitful and perennial. We are passing away with you; but the town, this Concord that we are, is to last and for an indefinite future to be elevated and enriched by means of what you have done. It is enriched, indeed, by your example. To do something for the permanent benefit of mankind is the purest, as it is the highest, object of human ambition.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, Esq., followed with characteristic remarks, from which extracts are here given:

"That town is attractive to its native citizens and to immigrants which has a healthy, open, good land, well-constructed sidewalks, and a good school system, and if it has a good town hall, good churches, good preachers, good schools; but still more if it has availed itself of the act of the legislature authorizing towns to tax themselves for the support of public libraries; happier yet if it has citizens who can wait for the slow growth of the town to make this adequate to the desire of the people, but best of all, as it is the act which we have met to witness and acknowledge to-day. I think we cannot easily esteem the benefit conferred in this as I foresee good benefit from this noble town. We have a splendid library, which will make readers of those who are not readers, scholars of those who do not study."

"If you consider what has befallen you when reading a poem, a history, or a novel even—how you forgot the time of day, the dinner hour, the room with your engagements for the evening, you will easily admit that books make all towns equal. With Concord a library makes it as good as London, Paris, or Rome. Robinson Crusoe, if he had a shelf of books, could easily have been content with his island. Every faculty casts itself into an art, and memory into writing—that is, into books. The plant phylloxera, which gave the name to paper, is of more importance in history than silver or gold. Its first use for writing is between three and four thousand years old. I know the word 'literature' has in many ears a hollow sound. It is thought to be the entertainment of a few fanciful persons—not to be of aid for the multitude. But this comes from those who think everything is useless that cannot in some way add to their physical comforts. There are utilitarians who prefer that Jesus should have wrought as a carpenter and Paul as a tent-maker."

Books are a record of the best thought. The river of thought is constantly running from the invisible world into the minds of men, and the river of the custom of the ancient priests of Mexico to obtain fire and distribute it to every hearth in the nation. The influence of a book may extend to those who have never seen it. Shakespeare and Milton and Pindar have, through others, effected the minds of men who never heard of them. Who they have in them cannot be contained in a cup; it runs over into all the minds that will have it. Consider that it is our own state of mind in time that makes our own estimate of life and the world. If you sprain your foot, you will think that nature has sprained hers; and so when you sprain your mind you have a bad opinion of life. If you can kindle imagination, you are more, because more active. Music does this for some, poetry for others, and a good book will do it for a reader."

Many a time a book has decided a man's life. A book makes friends for you, for there is an acquaintance between you and the man who reads the same book. Dr. Johnson, hearing that a man read Borton's Analysis of Melancholy, exclaimed, "If I knew that man, I could hug him." We expect a great man to be a great reader. There is a wonderful similarity between great men in their estimate of books. Caesar, when shipwrecked and in danger of drowning, did not try to save his gold, but he took his Commentaries between his teeth and swam for the shore. The Duke of Marlborough would not succumb without a copy of Shakespeare. The Duchess d'Abrantes tells us that the first Napoleon called books and papers but his carriage while traveling, as fast as he read them, so that they would strew the road. For in proportion to the diffusing power should be the receiving power."

PRACTICAL VALUE OF EDUCATION. A person educated in the common branch of science will usually earn twice the sum that an uneducated one will, and the prospects are good for a student in the position of overseer or manager with a salary of many thousands, while the ignorant man has no such chance. A few years since, a director of one of the extensive cotton manufacturing corporations of New England, stated that thirty-five out of one hundred thousand operatives in their mills were unable to write their names, and that the wages of these were twenty-seven percent less than the wages of those who could write. In the same mills were one hundred and fifty girls who had been teachers. Their wages were seventeen and three quarters per cent above the general average, and forty per cent above those who made their mark. \* \* \* To women rapidly rising to her true position, to whom the avenues of trade, the professions and all kinds of employment are opening, this subject appeals with peculiar force. She would have a deep interest in any measure which will render her less dependent on husband, brother, or father, and which will enable her to obtain a generous support when other resources fail. She should seek to be in a condition to feel independent, and to be able with ease to earn a livelihood. A knowledge of some art will tend to give her a higher position and to secure for her higher respect. From her knowledge of colors and relations, and her skill in drawing, woman is fitted to succeed in what ever requires taste. The success of the lady pupils at South Kensington is greater than that of the male students, and the results in the face of greater difficulties. The many branches of art-workmanship requiring delicate fingers and native readiness of taste can be better performed by woman than by man. In 1850 30,000 women were employed in watch-making in Switzerland. Our silk manufacturers employ 7,500 women in light, clean, remunerative work. A lady in Pittsburgh receives \$350 per month for designs in embroidery, made wholly by herself. Woman can excel in drafting, architectural drawing, photography, engraving, modeling, designing and painting. Education in the arts, by opening to her new departments of labor, will enable her better to compete with men, secure for her better compensation for her services, and will increase her usefulness and influence."

## After Dinner.

He provoked me into loving him," was a Rochester girl's excuse for engaging herself to a man whom she had always professed to hate.

Heaven, according to the idea of a Vermont clergyman, is 120,000,000 miles from the earth, and Blobs topped being good at eight o'clock this morning. He says: "Two far adieu."

French officers are not allowed to marry until the bride has a fortune of not less than \$5,000. The limit was for nearly \$2,000, but the price has been raised.

That Boston youth was well informed in the ways of women who offered himself to a girl in this style: "Do you love me, and will you be my wife? Now, just tell me the truth about it!"

A person who said he was a clergyman presented himself at the office of a noted real estate firm in Boston, and asked if they would give him a list of all the farms offered for sale and owned by widows. The real estate man asked whether he wanted to buy a widow or marry a farm. "But I don't want either," replied the clergyman, "I want to know what they are worth."

Concerning teeth, a small boy asked a lady who made hers. "My Creator," she replied. "Well," said the youngster, "Dr. Tusketter made my ma's and they beat your clean out o' eight."

An amusing case was tried in Kansas City (Mo.) court the other day. One Irishman sued another for killing his dog. "Did you kill the dog, Pat?" asked the Judge. "I did, yer honor," promptly replied Pat, "but divil take me if I don't make him prove it." The case was proceeded with, and Pat's guilt was established. Then turning to the plaintiff the Judge asked, "What was your dog worth, Dennis?" "Divil a cent was he worth, yer honor, but he was jabsome sure, I'm making him pay the full value of the beast."

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